Can Skylights Save Energy?

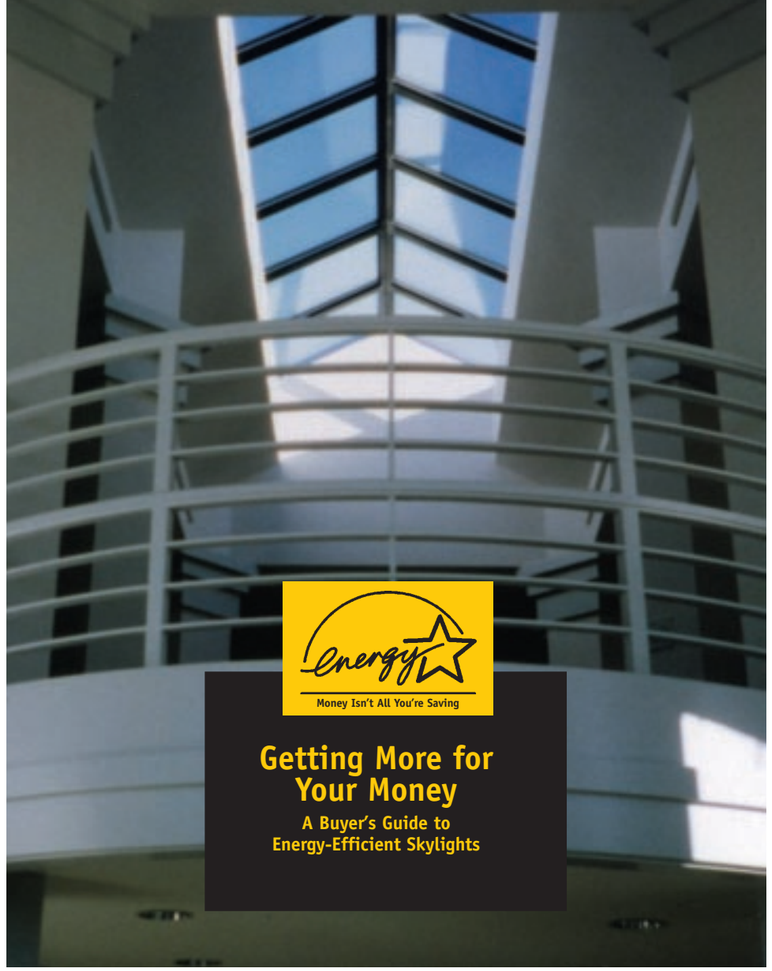
In a typical house, over 40 percent of the annual energy budget is consumed by heating and cooling. Proper selection of skylights can significantly affect how much money we spend or save every year on keeping our homes bright and comfortable.

When you are purchasing skylights, you need to get the most for your money. A great way to find the right products for your home is to look for the ENERGY STAR® symbol. ENERGY STAR-labeled skylights are twice as efficient as the average skylights manufactured just ten years ago. These high-performing products can help cut your heating and cooling costs, make your home more comfortable, and help the environment, too. Here are some thoughts to consider when looking for an energy-efficient skylight.

What Features Make the ENERGY STAR®-Qualified Skylight a Good Buy?

New materials, coatings, design and construction features, as well as other innovations, make ENERGY STAR-labeled skylights a cost-effective investment. ENERGY STAR-labeled skylights are 40 percent more efficient than products required under the most common national building codes. This means you will be using less energy to heat and cool your home all year, resulting in lower utility bills. There are also environmental benefits associated with choosing ENERGY STAR-labeled skylights and other products. Most energy is produced by burning fossil fuels in large power plants. When we use energy more efficiently in our homes and businesses, we also help reduce air pollution.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ■ U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



energy

Money Isn't All You're Saving

Getting More for Your Money

A Buyer's Guide to Energy-Efficient Skylights

In a typical house, over 40% of the annual energy budget is consumed by heating and cooling.

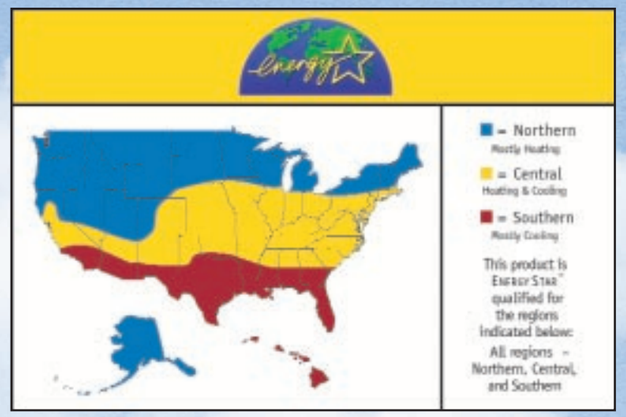
Will I Be Able to Find the Style and Type of Skylight I Want?

When choosing an ENERGY STAR skylight, you don't sacrifice comfort, versatility or style. High-performance skylights are available in fixed or operable models for installation in sloped roofs from 15 degrees to 85 degrees. Additionally, they are manufactured with most common frame materials including aluminum, fiberglass, vinyl and wood.

What Other Advantages Can I Expect from an ENERGY STAR® Skylight?

Some home furnishings and decor can actually suffer a kind of sunburn when continuously exposed to daylight. The ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun can cause fading and degradation of many materials and dyes found in upholstery, carpet, artwork, wood or paint. Low-e coated glass, found in many ENERGY STAR skylights, can reduce these harmful UV rays by up to 75 percent, giving greater protection to your interiors.

ENERGY STAR skylights, by virtue of their design, eliminate draftiness, control heat gain from the sun and resist condensation for greater comfort. A well-insulated skylight also diminishes sound transmission.



How Can I Get the Most Energy-Efficient Skylight for My Climate?

ENERGY STAR performance requirements for skylights are tailored to fit the energy needs of the country's different climate regions – Southern, Northern and Middle. The ENERGY STAR Climate Region Map gives you clear guidelines for determining which skylights will do the best job to help reduce heating and cooling costs in your region – and your home. To be sure, cross-check your selection with the Climate Region Map on each ENERGY STAR label. Some ENERGY STAR-labeled skylights may be best suited to just one climate region, while others may meet performance requirements for all three regions. In all cases, your decision is simplified – look for the ENERGY STAR label.

ENERGY STAR-labeled skylights are 40% more efficient than products required under the most common national building codes.

What is an NFRC Rating?

All ENERGY STAR-qualifying skylights bear a label from the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC). NFRC is a non-profit collaborative of manufacturers, builders, designers, government officials, utilities and consumers that provides unbiased energy performance ratings for window, doors and skylights (or "fenestration"). Independent NFRC ratings provide the basis for ENERGY STAR's skylight performance requirements.

NFRC's labels provide product-specific performance ratings for technical qualities such as U-factor (the rate of heat loss from your home through the skylight), and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (how much heat your house gains from the sun as a result of the skylight's performance). Look for lower U-factor and appropriate SHGC numbers for the best performance in your area of the country.

Resources:

ENERGY STAR Hotline:
800-DOE-EREC
(800-363-3732)

ENERGY STAR Website:
http://www.energystar.gov